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Local News

Fleming welcomes new business

By JUSTIN STORY

Wednesday, April 27, 2005 4:37 PM EDT

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FLEMINGSBURG -- An assortment of dignitaries and farmers gathered at Flemingsburg-Fleming County Industrial Park Wednesday for the official dedication of 4 Seasons Marketing.

The company, which manufactures feed supplement for customers in several states, opened last September in the former Fleming Homes building.

The Flemingsburg facility returns some of the jobs lost in the industrial park after Champion Enterprises Inc. purchased Fleming Homes in 1998 and moved its operation to Morehead Road, before closing in 2003.

"Flemingsburg is the perfect spot for us," said 4 Seasons Human Resources Director Jeremy Faulkner. "We moved into the old office last September and revamped it with new wiring and everything."

The company manufactures Ultralyx nutritional supplement products for beef and dairy cattle, sheep, horses and goats.

Faulkner said 4 Seasons employs 31 people in its new facility and distributes its product to 31 states.

At the dedication ceremony, Fleming County Judge-Executive Larry Foxworthy reflected on how the industrial park's new tenant

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has affected the local economy.

"This was a project that had started with the intention of adding about 15-20 jobs to Fleming County," said Foxworthy. "You'd be amazed what's been done in the short amount of time (4 Seasons) has been here."

Rep. Mike Denham remarked that the new business represents a step forward for Kentucky as local farmers adjust to a new tobacco market without the price support system.

"This is the type of entrepreneurial spirit we need across the state with agricultural diversification projects," said Denham.

The door was opened for 4 Seasons to come to Flemingsburg two years ago when the Kentucky

Agriculture Development Board approved \$1 million for Buffalo Trace Area Development District for a revolving loan fund. That money was then loaned to 4 Seasons Marketing.

The company is supporting Kentucky tobacco farmers through the purchase of distiller's grain from Commonwealth Agri-Energy, the purchase of meal from the soybean extrusion plant in Lewis County and the purchase of hardwood pallets from manufactures located in the Buffalo Trace area.

The money is part of Kentucky's Master Settlement Agreement, which the legislature invested into the Kentucky Agriculture Development Fund.

Since the inception of the program in January 2001, the Agriculture Development Board has approved more than 1,400 proposals committing more than \$155 million to an array of county, regional and state projects designed to increase net farm income and create sustainable new farm-based business enterprises in the wake of the federal tobacco buyout.

"We're at the crossroads where we have to help our farmers over the next 5-10 years about whether to make that transition," said Keith Rogers, executive director for Gov. Ernie Fletcher's Office of Agricultural Policy.

The guests gave their speeches before local farmers and customers from 10 states in the massive warehouse area of the plant, with the whirring of machinery in the background.

Three production lines at the rear of the plant were manned by workers packaging the feed that came down from mixers outside the plant.

The feed is packaged in pressed block products, protein tubs and loose mineral bags.

A storage building behind the main factory houses large piles of minerals such as salt and limestone for the feed.

Wayne Manning, 4 Seasons president/CEO, led people on a tour of the plant after the ceremony, saying that trucks carry out 150 tons of feed supplement each day from the Flemingsburg plant



Johnny Vise removes containers of feed supplement from the production line Wednesday prior to the Grand Opening ceremonies of Four Seasons in Flemingsburg. Terry Prather/Staff



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"Opening a new business is a lot like New Year's Eve," said Manning. "We look to the future with optimism, but we also wonder what the future will hold. It's our goal that this day may be the start of something big."

Contact Justin Story at Justin.Story@lee.net or 564-9091, ext. 276

For more news from the area, go to www.flemingsburg-online.com



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